



**MORAGA**

See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements  
**Town of Moraga:**  
[www.moraga.ca.us](http://www.moraga.ca.us)  
 Phone: (925) 888-7022  
**Chamber of Commerce:**  
[www.moragachamber.org](http://www.moragachamber.org)  
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# Town council and planning commission hold joint discussion regarding affordable housing



An example of a multi-family unit

Photo provided

By Vera Kochan

Moraga is in the process of gearing up for its Comprehensive Advanced Planning Initiative: 6th Cycle Housing Element and Rezone and General Plan Update. California requires all cities to update its Housing Element every eight years (this cycle will cover 2023-2031), and it must be adopted by Jan. 31, 2023.

The planning department has already held several informative meetings with the town council and the planning commission, in addition to conduct-

ing three community workshops for Moraga's residents. The latest joint council/commission discussion took place on Nov. 17. Also in attendance were Barry Miller, an urban planning consultant, Director of Real Estate Development Susie Criscimagna with Eden Housing, Policy Director Jeffrey Levin with East Bay Housing Organizations, and Managing Principal Matt Kowta with BAE Urban Economics.

According to a staff report by Planning Director Afshan Hamid and Miller, "One objective of the Housing Element is to support the production of a variety of housing types for a diverse range of income groups. The Town is required to plan for its 'fair share' of the region's housing needs over the eight-year planning period. The assignment is made by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) through a process called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)." For the 2023-31 period, Moraga must identify 1,118 housing units, 501 of which must be for low and very low-income households, located on sites that are zoned at densities of 20 units per acre or more. Since Moraga is not typically known for affordable housing, it must develop policies and programs to support private and non-profit sectors with housing construction.

There are a number of

zoning tools that can come into play with regards to affordable housing. One of the primary tools is to zone land for multi-family use such as apartment buildings. With constructions of three stories or higher, densities of 30 units per acre can quickly help to meet the RHNA standards.

Another zoning tool would make allowances for multi-family dwellings in commercial districts. Minimum density requirements would prohibit single-family homes from being built on land zoned for multi-family units or require any housing built on former commercial areas to be at least 20 units per acre.

Yet another zoning tool would be to take advantage of state density bonuses. These allow developers to build additional units if they create some affordable units within the projects. Bonuses are also available for senior housing, college student housing, disabled veterans housing, foster parent housing and housing for formerly homeless residents.

California density bonus laws already limit the number of parking spaces that a municipality may require for affordable housing units. The Moraga Municipal Code currently requires two parking spaces for each dwelling unit regardless of the type. Additionally, for every two dwelling units, one guest parking space is required. The

staff report states, "The Town could consider reducing parking requirements for projects meeting specific criteria, such as affordability, proximity to bus or shuttle service, availability of off-site parking nearby, or availability of e-bikes, shared cars, or other modes of travel that reduce car ownership."

Other tools the town might consider is to offer reduced permit, planning or impact fees; and streamline the lengthy permit approval processing. It could also offer Inclusionary Housing and Housing Trust Funds, whereby a policy would require a specified share of new market-rate housing developments to be affordable to low- or moderate-income households. If developers opt to pay an "in lieu fee" rather than building the units on-site, then the fee is deposited into a Housing Trust Fund which accrues fees from other projects. When the funds increase, the proceeds may be used to help nonprofit developers build 100% affordable housing or other forms of housing assistance.

Accessory Dwelling Units (sometimes called "in-law" units) are another means of adding to the town's affordable housing requirements. Additionally, large companies or institutions can build housing for their employees; or in a Saint Mary's College example, housing for their faculty, staff and students.

While the Nov. 17 Special Meeting was merely for informational purposes with no direct fiscal impact, the various tools presented and discussed would conceptually have a variety of financial effects on the town.

For more information regarding the Moraga 2023-31 Housing Element Project visit: [makemoragahome.org](http://makemoragahome.org).

**MORAGA**  
 Community Foundation

**Are you passionate about Moraga?**  
 The Moraga Community Foundation (MCF) is looking for additional board members. We raise funds to finance community projects that enhance the quality of life in the Town of Moraga. If you live or have a business in Moraga, you are eligible to apply. MCF terms are for two years, and board members meet monthly.

**Let's build a better Moraga together!**  
 Please email a letter of interest to [applicants@moragacommunityfoundation.org](mailto:applicants@moragacommunityfoundation.org). MCF is a 501(c)(3) organization. For more information please visit [www.moragacommunityfoundation.org](http://www.moragacommunityfoundation.org)

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## Fatal accident on Moraga Road over Thanksgiving weekend

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Police Department closed Moraga Road to traffic between Rheem Boulevard and Lucas Drive on the morning of Nov. 26 to allow paramedics to tend to a bicyclist who was struck by a car at approximately 10:15 a.m. The driver remained at the scene to cooperate with police. Despite life-saving attempts the victim, Roger Rus-

sell, 77, of Moraga was pronounced dead at the scene.

According to MPD Chief Jon King as of Dec. 2, "The incident remains under investigation. Both vehicles were traveling north on Moraga Road prior to the collision, but the determination of the cause of the accident is pending the conclusion of the continuing investigation."

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

website (<https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/bicycle-safety>) gives bicycle safety advice that MPD Lieutenant Brian South stated offers, "lots of tips in there that we would endorse."

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has information is requested to contact MPD Corporal Craig Walker at (925) 888-7055 ext. 7164 or via email: [cwalker@moraga.ca.us](mailto:cwalker@moraga.ca.us).

## Independently audited financial reports for the town come back 'clean' once again

By Vera Kochan

For the past eight years, the town of Moraga has submitted its financial reports to the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada, and has been awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. To receive the award, a government entity is required to publish an easily readable and well-organized report that satisfies accepted accounting principles and applicable legal mandates. Having passed the independent audit, the town hopes to add its ninth award to the "trophy shelf" soon.

According to a Nov. 10 staff report by Administrative Services Director Norm Veloso, the independent auditing firm of Maze & Associates was charged with examining the town's financial reports for the year ending June 30, 2021. This term's reporting also included a statistical section with up-to-

date historical information on financial trends, revenue capacity, debt capacity, economic and demographic information, and operating information which is required with the town's \$7.72 million issuance of the 2013 Certificates of Participation for Infrastructure Improvements, and with the Securities and Exchange Commission and specifically for annual continuing disclosure compliance.

Moraga's General Fund-General Purpose Unassigned Fund Balance is \$5.04 million at year end compared to \$4.87 million of Unassigned Fund Balance on the adopted budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21. The increase can be attributed to higher revenue in addition to expenditures coming in below budgeted amounts. The \$5.04 million projects a reserve level of 55.8% compared to 51% of the FY 2020-21 adopted budget. The reserve policy of 50% has been met.

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Dr. Matthew Tamplen, who grew up in Lafayette and is a well-known Facial Plastic Surgeon with Kaiser Permanente, just opened a private practice in Downtown Orinda to better serve Lamorinda patients.

**Matthew Tamplen, MD**  
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**Town Council:** Wednesday, Dec. 8, 7 p.m.  
**Planning Commission:** Tuesday, Dec. 21, 7 p.m.,  
**Park and Recreation Commission:**  
 Monday, Dec. 20, 7 p.m.,  
**Moraga School District Board Meetings:**  
 Tuesday, Dec. 14, 6 p.m. [www.moraga.k12.ca.us](http://www.moraga.k12.ca.us).

